

J. V. FLETCHER LIBRARY DEPARTMENT

Ellen Rainville, Library
Director

This FY 2024 Annual Report is dedicated to retiring Youth Services Librarians Ellen Apicco, Jacki Dibble and Nancy Boutet recognizing their combined 65 years of stellar service to the youth of Westford, especially their creativity during the COVID pandemic shutdown.

FY 24 opened with the appointment of the Designer Selection Committee, and work on the Designer Selection process for the future Library building. Joint Meetings of the Board of Library Trustees and the Permanent Town Building Committee were held at least monthly throughout the fiscal year, with additional meetings of the Library Working Group. Minutes from all joint meetings may be found on the Town website, and video recordings of the meetings are available on the WestfordCAT site. With the selection of Finegold Alexander Architects as the design firm, the fiscal year closed with Design Development at over 50%. We thank here the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, Permanent Town Building Committee, Select Board, Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee, Library Friends, Board of Library Trustees, and many supporters who have shown such confidence in this exciting future. We look forward to serving our library patrons through the duration of the project and celebrating together a new, wonderful building, and the many new services it will afford.



Youth FY 24 Programs: Exciting new and former Youth Services programming in FY 2024 included:

- Snap Circuits and LEGO Club
- Book Clubs K- Middle School
- Weekly Mother Goose
- Strega Nona
- Crafternoons
- Dinoman
- Upcycled Book Art
- Board Game Night
- Tiny Art Show
- Thrift Swap
- Boba Lounge
- EXAM WEEKS with extended open hours for Westford students



Adult programming continued its monthly Book Groups and Clubs with the *Library Book Discussion Group*, the *Monday Mystery Book Club*, and the *Non-fiction Book Club*. Thirty-four neighborhood and library and library/school Book Groups were supported by the Inter-Library Loan department. Westford Library is now collaborating with other Merrimack Valley libraries in offering bi-weekly *50+ Job Seekers Programs* into the future. Representative Adult programs — some virtual — included:

- 📖 *A Look Inside Hammond Castle*
- 📖 *Exploring Ancestry.com*
- 📖 *Ukelele Playalong*
- 📖 *Community Reads on Climate Change*
- 📖 *Áine Minogue Harp Concert*
- 📖 *Suffrage Song*
- 📖 *Why We Read*

“Thank you for sponsoring the 50+ Networking Group!” **Library Patron**



The three Summer Reading Programs (Child, Tween and Adult) netted 1,784 registrants from June 2023 through August 2023 for the state-wide reading theme of: *Be a Readosaurus* and *Dig Into Something New*. This summer read-fest — funded by the Friends of the J. V. Fletcher Library, Inc. and the Massachusetts Library System — saw another energetic, romping, largely outdoor Summer Reading Program. On May 31, the Library held a reception/program to bid farewell of the Head of Youth Services, Nancy Boutet, who retired after fourteen years of amazing, stupendous service to the youngsters of Westford! The afternoon featured “The Bubble-Guy”, mini-cupcakes, lemonade, signed garden stakes from young readers and the generous heartfelt send-offs of scores of young readers and their families. You will find “Fancy Nancy” in her garden!

Gift- and Grant-Funded Initiatives and Awards:

In FY 2024, the Friends of the J. V. Fletcher Library Inc. provided over \$20,000 in book and new format funds, and one-half of the Library’s MVLC annual network membership was paid from the State Aid to Public Libraries account. The library thanks those gracious donors who gave to

“What a beautiful job you are all doing! Thank you for all the wonder you create in Westford.” **Library Patron**

the Friends' 2023 Fall Appeal campaign to fundraise and to supplement Town funds for new media, downloadable collections, and technology purchases, which provided critical remote access to titles — a growing trend. The Friends are also thanked for three highly successful Book Sales this past year, for funding multiple museum passes, all library programming, the annual Wishlist and for ALL the ways their support expands and enhances daily Library service.



We thank here the Friends' Foundation Committee for their inspiring new fund-raising Initiative: "1,000 Homes for \$1,000" whereby Westford households can demonstrate support for the future Library building across three years. With a handsome informative website, town-wide mailings, brochures, lawn signs, post cards, and advertised Naming Opportunities within the new building, this initiative is a stellar example of how the Library Friends consistently and creatively support Westford's public library.

We thank the Westford Garden Club for underwriting the gift of passes to the *Tower Hill Botanic Garden* facility in Boylston and for adorning the Library's Main Street entrance all year round with such luxurious plantings! The library and families of Westford thank the KDK Foundation (Kurt Kelly Hockey Memorial Fund) for funding the fun-filled summer High-Flying Dogs and Ooch programs, and December's Mini-Golf Tournament! As well, we thank those donors to the J. V. Fletcher Library Memorial Book and Gift Account, who chose this generous option to remember and celebrate loved ones.

"Thanks for making the Library feel like home!" Library Patron

Facility Maintenance and IT Support, FY 2024: The following library maintenance issues were addressed:

- Air Chiller Tower Repairs
- Facilities Department provided plumbing assistance from School personnel
- Creation of a Continuity of Operations Plan

We thank here the *Facilities, Highway, IT and Parks and Grounds Departments*, for their support and assistance throughout the year, with all types of temperamental weather, and technology!



Administration, Professional Development and Town Civic Activity:

Library staff continued to be professionally active, and we celebrate here those library staff pursuing their Library Science degrees, and active in the following professional organizations. Additionally, Library administration and Board of Trustees continued to advocate for legislation increasing access to eBooks and all books.

- Effective Leadership Development Refresher (Town-sponsored)
- ALA (American Library Association)
- MLA (Massachusetts Library Association)
- MSLA (Massachusetts School Library Association)
- MVLC (Merrimack Valley Library Consortium)
- NELA (New England Library Association)
- PLA (Public Library Association)
- YALSA (Young Adult Library Services Association)
- Virtual School Library Journal Day of Dialog
- Virtual Library Journal Day of Dialog
- Virtual School Library Journal Middle Grade Magic

Library Staffing FY 2024:

Director — Ellen D. Rainville

Asst. Director — Kristina Leedberg

Senior Librarians:

Head of Youth Services — Nancy Boutet (*retired 5/31/24*); Lauren Evans (*promoted 6/10/24*)

Systems/Head of Technical Services — Dina Kanabar

Head of Reference & Information Services — Justin Liberti

Head of Circulation — Holly Sheridan-Pritchard

Staff Librarians:

ILL/Serials Librarian — Charles Schweppe

Young Adult Specialist — Jess Dymant (*resigned 5/1/24*); Alexis Chrobak (*promoted 6/10/24*)

Local History/Genealogist — Virginia Moore

Head Cataloger — Alla Brovina

Substitute — Sandy Kelly



Library Associates:

Cataloger/Data Entry — Lauren Evans
Fine Arts Librarian/Acquisitions — Carol McCahon (*retired 1/31/24*); Jeanne Millet (*promoted 2/1/24*)
Juvenile Reference/Program Assistants — Ellen Apicco (*retired 5/31/24*); Alexis Chrobak; William Overstreet (*resigned 9/21/23*); Victoria-Lynn Corr (*promoted 6/24/24*); Jill Sirois
Circulation and Reader’s Advisory — Mayleen Kelley; Judy Madsen; Heather Marquez; Jeanne Millet; Lisa Navarro; Heather Nevits; Chantale Shepard; Erin Trainor (*promoted 4/1/24*)

Library Technicians:

Substitute — Lawrence Bentley (*resigned 12/1/23*); Jacki Dibble (*retired 5/15/24*); Quinn Dolan; Jeff Henry (*resigned 12/7/23*); Jen Petro-Roy (*resigned 7/31/23*); Erin Trainor

Library Technicians:

Order and Acquisition Receiving — Susan Blanchette
Inter-Library Loan Support — Sara Morton (*resigned 8/15/22*); Diana Daniels; Bari Pender

Maintenance Worker I and II — Robert Otto (*retired 11/30/23*); Richard Trainor; Joseph Burke (*retired 6/27/24*)

Office Manager — Amy Spadano (*resigned 2/16/24*); Heather Marquez (*promoted 3/25/24*)

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Capstone Volunteer: None

Volunteers, In-Library and Friends giving over 2,400 hours

